



NCARNG

Weekly Safety Newsletter



March 3, 2015

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Sprains and Strains

Are a Pain

What is the difference between a Sprain and a Strain?

A sprain is an injury to a ligament (tissue that connects two or more bones at a joint). In a sprain, one or more ligaments is stretched or torn. A strain is an injury to a muscle or a tendon (tissue that connects muscle to bone). In a strain, a muscle or tendon is stretched or torn.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Sprains?

The usual signs and symptoms of a sprain are: pain, swelling, bruising and not being able to move or use the joint. Sometimes people feel a pop or tear when the injury happens. A sprain can be mild, moderate, or severe.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Strains?

A strain can cause: pain, muscle spasms, muscle weakness, swelling, cramping, and trouble moving the muscle. If a muscle or tendon is torn completely, it is often very painful and hard to move.



How are Sprains and Strains Treated?

Doctors recommend controlling swelling with the RICE Method:

- Rest the injured area. If the ankle or knee is hurt, the doctor might tell you to use crutches or a cane.
- Put ice on the injury for 20 minutes at a time. The doctor might say to do this 4 to 8 times a day.
- Compress (squeeze) the injury using special bandages, casts, boots, or splints. Your doctor will tell you which one is best for you and how tight it should be.
- Elevate. Put the injured ankle, knee, elbow, or wrist up on a pillow.
- The doctor may also recommend taking medicines, such as aspirin or ibuprofen.

After treating pain and swelling, doctors usually say to exercise the injured area. This helps to prevent stiffness and increase strength. Some people need physical therapy. You may need to exercise the injured area or go to physical therapy for several weeks. Your doctor or physical therapist will tell you when you can start to do normal activities, including sports. If you begin too soon, you can injure the area again. It is important to see a doctor if you have a painful sprain or strain. This helps you get the right treatments.

Tips to Prevent Sprains and Strains

- Avoid exercising or playing sports when tired or in pain.
- Eat a well-balanced diet to keep muscles strong.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Wear shoes that fit well.
- Warm up and stretch before exercising
- Wear protective equipment when exercising.
- Run on flat surfaces.

*For more information visit www.niams.nih.gov





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Television commercials advertise them. Celebrities endorse them. Electronic cigarettes – also known as *e-cigarettes* or *e-cigs* – have grown in popularity in the past five years as a safe alternative to smoking. Problem is—there's no evidence to back up this claim. In fact, poison centers reported a 219 percent increase in emergency calls in the past year related to electronic cigarettes and their main ingredient, liquid nicotine. While experts figure out exactly what electronic cigarettes do to your body, these facts will help you determine what's true and what's false in the e-cigarette debate.

WHAT'S AN E-CIG, ANYWAYS?

E-cigarettes are battery-operated devices often designed to look like regular tobacco cigarettes. Instead of tobacco, e-cigarettes are filled with liquid that contains nicotine and other chemicals. When that liquid is heated it turns into vapor that can be inhaled.

FACT #1: E-CIGARETTES ARE STILL ADDICTIVE

While e-cigarettes don't contain tobacco, the main ingredient is nicotine – one of the most addictive stimulants out there. Many e-cigarette devices use cartridges that contain liquid nicotine. These "e-liquids" are a big safety concern. Tiny amounts can cause vomiting, seizures, and can even be lethal when absorbed or ingested.



FACT # 2: THEY CONTAIN 19 HARMFUL CHEMICALS

Medical researchers have identified at least 19 harmful chemicals in e-cigarettes, some of which can cause cancer. Studies show a teaspoon of highly diluted "e-liquid" is enough to kill an adult.

FACT # 3: NO REGULATION YET MEANS YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SMOKING

E-cigarettes are still relatively new and the long-term health effects are still unknown. The FDA recently announced plans to regulate e-cigarettes using the same standards as tobacco products. But, there's no timetable – yet – for when the new regulations will go into effect. This means that nicotine levels and "e-liquid" ingredients vary widely from product to product and for the time being there is no proof that these ingredients are safe.

FACT # 4: THEY AREN'T PROVEN TO HELP YOU QUIT

Although some smokers have found that e-cigarettes helped them stop or cut back on tobacco use, the FDA has not approved e-cigarette use as a tobacco cessation method. E-cigarettes promote the habit of getting a nicotine fix by inhaling from a cigarette-like device. Experts warn that this can lead to nicotine dependence and even initiate cigarette use in previous non-smokers.

FACT # 5: THEY'RE BANNED ON BASE

Though the FDA hasn't officially cracked down on e-cigarettes yet, the Army certainly has. E-cigarettes have the same restrictions as tobacco and are prohibited in all Army workspaces.

**Article from www.guardyourhealth.com

